PCT WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
International Bureau

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 6 : G06F 1/00 — A1

(11) International Publication Number: WO 99/59049

(43) International Publication Date: 18 November 1999 (18.11.99)

(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB99/01431

(22) International Filing Date: 7 May 1999 (07.05.99)

(30) Priority Data:
9809885.8 9 May 1998 (09.05.98) GB

(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: VIRCON LIMITED [GB/GB]; Level 2, Saltire Court, 20 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2ET (GB).

(72) Inventors; and
(75) Inventors/Applicants *(for US only)*: ROBB, David, Shepherd, Stewart [GB/GB]; 22 Lumsden Park, Cupar, Fife KY15 5YL (GB). LEITCH, Victor, Andrew [GB/GB]; Lusta, Carslogie Road, Cupar, Fife KY15 4HY (GB). BAILIE, Richard, Samuel [GB/GB]; 28 Ferryfield, Cupar, Fife KY15 5DG (GB).

(74) Agents: McCALLUM, William, Potter et al.; Cruikshank & Fairweather, 19 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow G1 3AE (GB).

(81) Designated States: AU, CA, GB, JP, SG, US, European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).

Published
With international search report.
Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.

(54) Title: PROTECTED STORAGE DEVICE FOR COMPUTER SYSTEM

(57) Abstract

The invention is a storage device (1) for a host computer system. The device (1) incorporates a Supervisor function for controlling access to information stored in a storage medium (2) of the device. The main embodiment described is a hard disk drive (1) comprising: one or more disk platters (2) for storing information; a ROM (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the drive; a volatile RAM (5); a micro–controller (7) for controlling the transfer of information to and from the disk platter(s) (2); and an interface (6) for interfacing the drive (1) with the host computer system and via which information is transferred to and from the disk platter(s) (2) under the control of the micro–controller (7). A Supervisor is provided in the form of firmware which is preferably stored in the ROM (4), the Supervisor operating the micro–controller (7) so as to protect information stored on the disk platter(s).